

Butterflies in Northern Greece: June-July 1978

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The following account is based upon the results of mainly roadside collecting in northern Greece between the 18th June and 8th July 1978. We revisited localities where we had collected on previous occasions (Dacie, J. V. and M. K. V. and Grammaticos, 1970, 1972, 1977) as well as venturing into several new areas. Based at Kallikratia in the Chalcidiki peninsula, we visited mountainous country near Florina (19th-20th June), explored several areas north of Drama (23rd-25th June; 27th June), collected en route from Drama to Alexandroupolis and back via Xanthi (28th June; 2nd July) and Komotini (29th June), explored an area north of Alexandroupolis (30th June; 1st July), and made a separate visit to mountains north of Serre (7th-8th July). In addition, we collected on Mt. Cholomon in the Chalcidiki peninsula on the 21st June and 5th July.

We identified 129 species, including ten species which we had not previously seen in the area. Several of these may be new records for Greece.

The following species we feel are of particular interest:—

Pieridae

Pontia chloridice Huebner. We were surprised to find a well-established colony of this species among the low hills inland from Alexandroupolis. On 30th June the second generation was flying freely at about 400 m. along the stony bed of a small stream, with low trees and bushy scrub covering the hillsides. *P. chloridice* is well known to occur in E. Bulgaria (Roumelis) and in N. Turkey; and we are told by Professor Lorkovic that single specimens have been recorded from Yugoslav Macedonia in the Vardar valley at Demi Kapija and near Gevgelija on the Grecian frontier. We are unaware of previous Grecian records.

Elphinstonia charltonia penia Freyer. When we stopped for lunch on a dry, inhospitable mountainside north of Drama, we were astonished to discover that we had chosen the site of a colony of this very local butterfly. The insects were flying over the rough scrub at about 800 m. The specimens collected resemble in every respect the form from Skopje. The species has a curious distribution, extending from the Canary Islands and N.W. Africa to W. Asia. In Europe it occurs only in scanty colonies in Yugoslav Macedonia and, as we have shown, also in N. Greece.

Gonepteryx cleopatra europaea Verity. On 5th July males of this butterfly were common on Mt. Cholomon on the Chal-

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cidiki peninsula, flying at an altitude of 900 m. or more. On the uppersides the specimens are not remarkable; on the undersides the hindwings of four of six specimens are form *italica* Gerhardt, with yellow ground-colour. *G. cleopatra* was not seen further north, *i.e.*, near Florina or anywhere in the frontier mountains eastwards to Alexandroupolis. Thurner (1964) attributed its absence from Yugoslav Macedonia to lack of an acceptable foodplant.

Nymphalidae

Melitaea arduinna rhodopensis Freyer. We found this splendid subspecies fully out and in perfect condition on the 20th June, flying at 1,400 m. on a bushy mountainside near Florina, in a locality previously discovered by Dacie *et al.* (1977). This large and brilliant race was originally described by Freyer from "European Turkey", and the Florina area can be specified as the type locality. The specimens we collected there agree in every respect with Freyer's excellent figures, and it seems certain that the original specimen must have come from the same area. In Greece *M. a. rhodopensis* is certainly very local but rather widely distributed in the N.W. corner of the country. Thus it was taken by Dacie *et al.* (1977) near Lehovon, south of Florina between Kastoria and Amynteon, and by Koutsaftikis (1974) near Ioannina. Further east the race has been recorded by Rebel from Bulgaria and Romania, but a single female from Tulcea is small, forewing 21 mm.; specimens from Bulgaria have not been seen. The few specimens from Asiatic Turkey available for comparison are small and do not have the bold markings of the Grecian form.

Satyridae

Hipparchia fagi Scopoli. Specimens of this large species were taken by the roadside in several places near Drama, Xanthi and Serre.

Hipparchia syriaca Staudinger. A single female specimen was taken near Florina where the species had been caught earlier (Dacie *et al.* 1977). Further east, we did not encounter it until we reached Alexandroupolis; it was then found to be not uncommon at about 400 m., but very difficult to catch, along a road running through the low hills to the north of the town. Three males taken for identification were found to be all *H. syriaca*.

Hipparchia delattini Kudrna. This species was abundant in the locality between Florina and Edessa where it had been found flying over a barren, stony upland area (Dacie *et al.* 1977) and was present also in another colony a few miles distant. It was not found elsewhere by us. Its distribution is not well defined at present, but in addition to N.W. Greece it is known to occur in S. Bosnia (Yugoslav Macedonia) as far north as Kosovo and has been reported from Sebenike in Dalmatia.

Hipparchia aristaesus senthes Fruhstorfer. This species was seen frequently, *e.g.*, near Serre, Drama, Xanthi and Alexandroupolis, and whenever possible specimens were taken

for examination. East of Florina all the specimens were confirmed as *H. a. senthes*. The species was not seen in the Florina area itself.

Erebia oeme Hübner. North of Drama we found an extensive colony flying at 1,300-1,650 m. among the fir trees which covered the mountains. The race can be placed as *E. o. vetulonia* Fruhstorfer, with upperside markings fully developed but scarcely sufficiently striking to rank as *E. o. spodia* Staudinger. This variable species is widely distributed in Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, but we believe it has not been recorded previously from Greece.

Coenonympha rhodopensis Elwes. A few worn specimens were taken near Florina and others north of Serre, flying at about 1,600 m. We were clearly too late for this interesting species, first recorded for Greece by Koutsaftikis in 1974. *C. rhodopensis* is a mountain species and in Greece it appears to be restricted to Macedonia, but it is widespread in Bulgaria and southern Yugoslavia. In Italy it is found on Monte Baldo and the central Abruzzi. Although known since 1900 as *C. tullia rhodopensis*, the taxon is usually given specific rank today.

Coenonympha leander Esper. Several worn males were taken in several localities in the mountains north of Florina at about 1,500 m. All appear to be of the typical form, *C. l. leander*, and correspond exactly with the Bulgarian race; the uppersides are rather dark. They clearly differ from *C. l. orientalis* Rebel which occurs in the Pindus Mts. north of Kalambarka.

Lasiommata petropolitana F. A single worn male was taken flying with *E. oeme* in the locality north of Drama.

Riodinidae

Hamearis lucina L. Worn specimens were seen flying at 1,600 m. near Florina and others north of Drama flying at 1,000 m.

Lycaenidae

Quercusia quercus L. Four males were taken in the hilly country north of Alexandroupolis. These are of large size, with forewing 19 mm.; the uppersides are dark with greenish reflections. In these respects they agree with a larger series from Tripolis (Peloponnesos) and are easily distinguished from central European specimens. The distribution of this race should be worth further investigation.

Heodes ottomanus Lefèbvre. A few males were taken near Xanthi and north of Alexandroupolis; they were not uncommon on Mt. Cholomon in one locality at about 1,000 m.

Tarucus balkanicus Freyer. A single specimen was caught north of Drama.

Everes decoloratus Staudinger. This species was not uncommon in several localities near Drama.

Glaucopsyche alexis Poda. A few males were seen north of Drama and near Xanthi and Serre. The uppersides of all the specimens taken had unusually broad black marginal borders.

Maculineaalcon D. & S. A small colony was found at an altitude of 1,200 m. on a subalpine meadow north of Drama. The specimens taken were not in any way remarkable. In the Balkans the species seems to occur as a mountain butterfly. It is very local and generally rare, but quite widely distributed in Bulgaria and Yugoslavia. Its presence in Greece was first recorded by Coutsis (1972) who took a single specimen in the southern Pindus near Kalambarka. Further records have not been found for Greece where it is clearly very uncommon.

Lycaeidea idas L. This is widely distributed and we found it almost everywhere we visited. In form it corresponds to the large, handsome race, *L. i. magnagraeca* Verity, and is very different from the smaller races flying in Greece further south. We had hoped to find *L. argyrognomon* among the various specimens examined but this species has not been identified.

Eumedonia eumedoa Esper. About six specimens were taken at the locality N. of Drama where we found *Erebia oeme* Hübner. All are referable to the large eastern form *E. e. rumeliensis* Eischberger.

Agrodiaetus admetus Freyer. This species was not uncommon in fresh condition in two localities N. of Drama and also N. of Serre.

Agrodiaetus aroanensis Brown. A few specimens were taken near Xanthi. Only males were seen.

Aricia agestis D. & S. This was common in many places. Many specimens were examined but forms of *A. artaxerxes* were not seen.

Hesperiidae

Carcharodus lavatherae Esper. This species is widely distributed and locally common. We found it near Florina, Xanthi, Drama and Alexandroupolis in hilly and mountainous places.

Gegenes nostrodamus F. Two specimens were taken on the coastal path at Kallikratia, on the west side of the Chalcidiki peninsula.

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